

# Grafrica

New Directions For Positive People

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## February Is **BLACK HISTORY MONTH**



Photo By James Van Der Zee

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# Speaking Personally

**"The Conscience Ruler-A Brief Study in Racism"**  
By Every Cooley

For the most part racism is not an innate disease of the human psyche. Rather, it is a learned process of learned, nurtured from childhood that festers throughout adulthood.

While not an expert when it comes to analyzing the exact reasons this disease plagues the majority of our society, this writer does have access to some factual insights that may illustrate how this malady is fed.

First, take out your dictionary, any English dictionary will do. Look up the words, black and white. Here is where you will find one of the sources from whence elements of racism are sown, reared, and dispersed throughout society.

Some years ago a brief controversy erupted around the words "Black, lie—White lie," which forced most of the dictionaries to eliminate black lie from their page. "A lie is a lie, regardless of how it is told" was the argument surrounding these two words. There's no such thing as a big lie and an itty bitty lie. When such is used in context of the traditional form it only serves to establish white supremacy while reducing the humanity of people of color to a level of monkiness.

Check it out for yourselves, dear readers. With the exception of Webster's 3rd Edition, 1976 copyright, the vast percentage of other well referred to dictionaries continue to harbour the word white lie on their pages. Among them include the well read Random House dictionary, 1966 edition; the American Heritage dictionary, 1973 edition and the 1975 edition of the Doubleday dictionary for home, school and office use.

Most of these dictionaries have been updated to meet the great change in word definitions. Webster eliminated both these words, but white lie remains in the others as "harmless, trivial" which can very well be considered a form of subliminal trickery used by the word masters to keep these two words in motion. If white lie is a harmless lie, then how do we define lie? Is the opposite of white, black? If so it is my traditional standard, that the antonym for white lie remains with us—a black lie—an untrue statement, willfully told with the intent to deceive.

Innocent black people insult themselves every day with these seductive words of deception. The word Black, according to the 1975 edition of the Doubleday Dictionary means: "Belonging to a dark-skinned ethnic group; especially negro; indicating or deserving disgrace, evil, wicked, disastrous, unlucky, worthy of censorship; including every other definition contained on sowing the seeds of racism.

of racism.

Devil's food cake is dark. Angel's food cake is white. The good guys wear white hats; the bad guys wear black. An innocent black cat is a wayward family member referred to as the black sheep; are unjustly treated because of superstitious myths and the stigma of darkness placed upon the words that provide descriptive pointers of knowledge about them. Snow-White is a classic fairytale, but overflows with racist dialogue Black Ball, Blacklist, Black magic are words that continuously nourish the racist attitudes ravaging rampant in our American society, and in this setting is fastly taking precedents across the entire globe.

A large number of our educational materials, along with society's greatest institutions constantly feed these words to the American psyche: seducing whites, as well as blacks into believing everything of color is evil, despicable, cursed, of which society owes no allegiance.

Since the majority of us depend on the dictionary for concrete definitions of words, this writer suggests that every reader examine the one he or she possesses. If you feel insulted with certain words and definitions, take out a pen, a piece of writing paper, sit down; compose a note, address it to the publishers of those books & demand the elimination or redefinition of words that racism to

the American people. Let them know that certain words and definitions insult your intelligence.

Perhaps as time progresses we will begin to witness new attitudes in

the manner in which people of color are viewed.

*Speaking personally is a forum provided for writers to address topics of interest and concern to the Black*

**Community.**  
Manuscripts must be typed and addressed to Editor, GRAFRICA, 28 Emerson Street, East Orange, N.J. 07018.

## Terrie Williams Appointed

Terrie M. Williams has been appointed Executive Director of the non-profit World Institute of Black Communications (WIBC), an organization dedicated to expanded participation by Black Americans in all aspects of the communications industry.

The World Institute was founded in June, 1978, by the National Black Network (NBN) to work closely with major corporations and advertising agencies to foster a greater awareness of the growing economic potential in Black communities across the nation.

With WIBC, Ms. Williams - previously the

executive director of the Black Owned Communications Alliance (BOCA), will be responsible for the development and coordination of the full range of WIBC programs and services, including fund raising activities.

The major project of the WIBC is the annual "Communications Excellence to Black Audiences" (CEBA) awards. Now in its fifth year, the program was created by WIBC to pay tribute to companies, advertising agencies and individuals that have demonstrated the expertise and vision to communicate their messages to Black audiences through the print, radio

and TV media.

Before joining BOCA, an organization of owners of Black Communications companies, Ms. Williams was program administrator of the Black Filmmaker Foundation, where she organized the annual "Dialogues with Black Filmmakers" series and the first National Conference of Black Independent Filmmakers.

Last fall, she was honored as the first recipient of the D. Park Gibson Award for Public Relations/Public Affairs by the Committee on Minorities of the Public Relations Society of America, New York Chapter.

## Words Of The Week

History is the scaffold upon which personal and group identities are constructed. It is a living library which provides a script of roles and models to which growth can aspire. By telling us what we can do. By telling us where we have been, history tells us where we can go... people need a sense of history in order to make history... without a historical sensibility, an oppressed people cannot represent themselves.

**Lerone Bennett  
Author-historian**

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# On The Cover

**Photo by James Van Der Zee**  
internationally recognized as one of the most important photographers of our time.

# Estevanico, The African Explorer

by Jan Carew

Estevan or Estevanico, was the most important African explorer to emerge in the early period of Spanish conquest and colonization. Writing about Estevan, Richard Robert Wright states that, "In 1527, some time prior to Coronado's expedition to New Mexico and the buffalo plains we are introduced to another Negro who was, perhaps, the most conspicuous of those who took part with the Spaniards in the early expeditions and discoveries on this continent."

This celebrated African explorer was one of the four survivors of the ill-fated expedition to the New World made by Pampillo de Narváez who sailed from Spain, June 17, 1527, having received from Emperor Charles V a commission as governor of Florida, Rio de las Palmas and Espíritu Santo. The tall, red-bearded, one-eyed de Narváez, had set out from San Lucas de Barameda with 500 men. Storms, fierce and persistent attacks by the Indians in Florida and along the Gulf coast, disease, dissentions and incompetent leadership, took a devastating toll.

Cabeza de la Vaca, treasurer of the expedition, is the survivor about whom we know the most, both from his own writings and those of others. His name, which means Head of Cows, dated back to the time when a distant peasant ancestor was sold after he left the Royal forces to a Moorish slave-trader in a distant land, at the entrance to which, he had, by agreement, placed the skull of a cow. The other survivors were Castillo de Maldonado, Donates de Comariza, and the latter's slave, Estevan or Estevanico. It is one of those curious ironies of history that Estevan should have started out as a slave, but after surviving an eight year long epic journey across the North American continent from Florida to Mexico, and after master and slave were in turn enslaved by the Indians, he ended up by being far more celebrated than his erstwhile owner.

For Estevan, tall, well-built, Black, with full and generously proportioned lips, and a commanding presence, was to survive the Narváez expedition, and subsequently to be commissioned by the viceroy of Mexico, Antonio de Mendoza, to lead another into New Mexico and Arizona.

There is no continuous narrative about Estevan's early life, but from the scraps of information left us by several historians, among whom were Cabeza de la Vaca, a companion in travail during their long and epic trek, and Perea de Ayala, the famous half-Indian, half-Spanish writer, we are certain that he was born in Azamor, one of the principal cities of Morocco. How he became the slave of de Comariza no one knows, but what we do know, is that Estevan was twenty-eight to thirty years of age when he joined the Narváez expedition and he had been trained as a medicine-man in Africa before he made his appearance in Spain. This became a crucial factor in his survival and that of his three companions.

The Narváez expedition, therefore, had come in the wake of other Spanish incursions into Florida which had left the Indians—who had long memo-



ries—narrating over a short but troubled history of bloody encounters, treachery and broken promises. The Spaniards, using horses, cross-bows, cannon, swords, guns and armour tried again and again by sheer brute force to subdue the Indians. But the Florida terrain, with its swamps, forests, lakes and its network of rivers and creeks, neutralized the Spanish's superiority in weapons, their fire power, and the mobility of their cavalry, and added to this, the stormy weather along the sea coast played havoc with their supply vessels.

Having reconnoitered the coast north of Tampa Bay, Narváez and his men headed inland. "But after three months of weariness, hunger and attacks by Indians, they found nothing, whereupon they returned to the coast."

Narváez then decided to build five vessels, and the way in which this was done revealed a quality of resourcefulness that was unique. In the very persuasive *Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca*, it was as if this redoubtable cavalier had gone out of the way to highlight his own role and to ignore or minimize that of his companions. He mentioned Estevan only when he could not avoid doing so. But to give him

his due, the occasions on which the Moor did appear in the narrative, he was written about with a certain detachment wherein he was neither praised nor damned. But Estevan, being the enormously resourceful person that he was, had played an important role in the construction of the first ocean-going vessels of European design in what was eventually to become the United States of America. De Vaca tells us that belows were made with deer skins, water bottles from horse hide, and nail saws, axes and other tools from the shrubs, spars, crossbeams and other iron objects. Tool making and leatherwork were skills that Moors had developed to a fine art. Estevan, a nameless carpenter (the only one in the company), and a Greek named Don Theodore had helped in the design but also in shipbuilding ventures. Theodore used real live pine trees and palm fiber for caulking. The tails and manes of horses were stripped for food but plaited into ropes for rigging and the man's shirts were soot together to make sails. The vessels, loaded on to "not over a span of the gunwales remained above water" set sail. The vessels, loaded on to "not over a span of the gunwales remained above water" set sail.

Toward the Texas coast, traversing the mouth of the Mississippi at least twelve years before its reported discovery, De Soto, Caught soon afterwards in a storm, they were cast ashore.

In fact, it was the scattered and half-drowned remnants who survived the mountainous surf and finally reached shore; and amongst them, miraculously, was Estevan, who de Vaca revealed could not swim.

The four survivors of the original 600 men who had set out from Spain, continued their epic journey. What saved them from slavery, ill treatment and possibly death, was luck, fortitude, and Estevan's skill as a medicine man. De Vaca's own account tells us of how he and his three companions treated thousands of Indian patients over a period of several years. But in his writings he implies that it was he, de Vaca, and not Estevan, who was responsible for their becoming healers, because he states, the Indians had him in such high esteem, that they forced this role upon him. If this was the case, why did the Indians enslave them all for years, often leading them naked and subjecting them to unbearable hardships, drudgery and hunger? It is evident that once Estevan had proved his skills as a healer, the whole basis of the relationship between the Indians and the fugitives changed. It is very probable, at this point, that the Moor began to train the three Spaniards in his own skills, from a medical and to cauterize it with fire, how to leech upon the sick, to extract excrement, and to use herbs and various substances to cure a variety of ills and imagined ailments. Estevan's amulet of his profession, which his companions also adopted, was a rattle gourd decorated with two feathers, the one red and the other white. The Spaniards would have had to learn about this from either an Indian or an African medicine-man, and since they were slaves, no Indian medicine-men would have deigned to teach them the skills of his highly respected profession. Wright, one of the few objective commentators on Estevan's achievements, writes:

It is evident that the Negro manifested fully as much tact and shiftness as the white men for self-maintenance, and to organize. These, of course, were slaves; rendered inchoate as it were, and readily become medicine-men of distinction. They are reported to have become so expert in healing the sick that the wages came from great distances to be cured, and besides followed them from place to place. The black physician, because best known with the Indians, distinguished and characterized, and the experience gained in these eight years of wandering, affording great prestige to him, (though) compared to the Spanish doctor.

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# Grace Bumbry and Shirley Verrett Electrify Carnegie Hall

By Ronald Haynes

Credit the great Marian Anderson with the monumental event that took place at Carnegie Hall on the afternoon of January 31. In tribute and in celebration of the 80th birthday of the famed contralto, sopranos Grace Bumbry and Shirley Verrett gave their first concert together. And if the audience had had its way, the two colorful divas would still be singing. For after three hours of Verdi, Donizetti, and Bellini, these giants of the operatic stage charmed, dazzled and ultimately seduced a sold-out house of appreciative music fans worn out and conquered by the artists' expertise of two truly beautiful women.

Beauty here is defined as that intangible something that permeates the soul. It's internal and finds fruition in the face, body, and character of the performer. Mesdames Bumbry and Verrett, by virtue of long arduous hours perfecting their craft, have achieved a state of high grace and art. Who better than these to take up the mantle cast down by Marian Anderson?

Both are former mezzo-sopranos with origins in church choir singing. Both won Arthur Godfrey talent contests in the 50's.

Grace Bumbry has triumphed operatically over the past two decades in New York, Paris, London, Vienna, Hamburg, and Rome. She has sung more than 175 Metropolitan Opera performances in over twelve leading roles. She appears on more than 20 best-selling records on every major label. Ms. Bumbry, a native of St. Louis, is an alumna of Boston University and the Music Academy of the West.

Shirley Verrett was born in New Orleans and raised in Los Angeles. She won many scholarships and, while at the Juilliard in New York, was allowed to accept professional engagements in this country and abroad. She made her Town Hall recital debut in 1958 and her New York City Opera debut in 1964. Ms. Verrett was the first Black artist to sing "Carmen" at the Moscow Bolshoi Opera in 1963. Her Metropolitan Opera debut occurred in 1968, and since then there have been countless recitals in London, Paris, and Italy.

The historic Carnegie Hall recital started off on a high note. Tilling the audience on a wave of excitement and anticipation, Shirley Verrett made her entrance first, wearing black chiffon and close-cropped hair accenting her exquisite facial bone structure. Grace Bumbry hair tied dramatically on top, followed. Dressed in Bill Blinn red and gold brocade, her sartorial statement was one of personality. Ms. Bumbry is a bigress. Not one to suffer fools gladly, she has been known to say exactly what is on her mind. Ms. Verrett is more kittenish yet positively regal in manner.

Opening with the "E un'anatema" from Ponchielli's "La Gioconda", Ms. Verrett sang the title role to Ms. Bumbry's Laure. After alternating solo turns from Verdi and Spontini, the prison scene duet from Donizetti's "Anna Bolena" was acted to the fullest. The two voices painted and thrusted in a duet of emotions between Anna and Jane Seymour in their wily for the love of Henry VIII.

During the intermission, violinist Isaac Stern paid tribute to the occasion, saying, "I've never heard such sheer beauty and such enthusiasm."

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Grace Bumbry

And he praised his long-time associate, Marilyn Anderson, by quoting a line from "The Member of the Wedding". In it, a character says that everybody needs a "soul". "Well, Marilyn", said Stern, "you are the 'soul' of us." Ms. Anderson was then presented with several dozen long-stemmed red roses.

As the divas re-entered for the second half, the air was inundated with applause, foot stomping, and appreciate whistles. Selections from Verdi's "Aida" and Bellini's "Norma" were performed. But the highlight of the second half of this operatic orgy was Ms. Vernet's interpretation of the "Salò" and "Ave Maris" from Verdi's "Otello". She sang the role of Desdemona, the doomed wife of Otello, with much

poignancy and passion.

In an aria from Cleo's "Adriana Lacoovenca", Ms. Barey's vocal pyrotechnics were much in evidence. Her trills thrilled. And she writhed the Hall into such a frenzy that a mere gesture was cause for prolonged applause.

At the close of the recital, curtain calls were many. The audience was brought to its feet in appreciation at being witness to a stellar event. We did not want it to end. And long after the last note, contented patrons could still be seen wandering through the aisles or sitting immobile, basking in the warm afterglow of a truly momentous event.



Shirley Verrett

# BOOKS

## The Black Worker

In the first collection of original documents to focus exclusively on black workers, Temple University Press is proud to announce the sixth volume in the acclaimed *Black Workers* series: **THE BLACK WORKER: The Era of Post-War Prosperity and the Great Depression, 1920-1936**, edited by Philip S. Foner and Ronald L. Lewis. As with other volumes, Volume VI is composed of documents drawn from private correspondence, the AFL archives, and contemporary newspapers and magazines. Volume VI covers two eras: the era of the "roaring twenties" and its effect on the black worker, and the economic miseries of the 1930's depression.

"The 'roaring twenties' may have been that for some Americans, but for blacks, this was not the 'golden age.' Although consistently undervalued in relation to white workers and forced to accept the least desirable jobs, blacks were charged exorbitant rents to live in crowded black ghettos from which they could not escape. Their attempts to escape were reflected in the continued migration to northern industrial centers, the struggles of A. Philip Randolph and others to end discrimination in the labor movement, and the founding and castration of the African Blood Brotherhood and the American Labor Congress.

The Great Depression of the 1930's began for blacks by the end of 1929. "The last to be hired, the first to be fired," Negroes experienced widespread unemployment as early as 1927, and by 1929, about one-fifth of all blacks, organized in industry had already been thrown out of work.

The economic difficulties aggravated the usual difficulties encountered by black workers in the labor market. Many employers immediately fired their Negroes or forced them to underbid white wage-earners in order to keep their jobs.

The preceding works in this eight-volume series are:

Volume I *From Colonial Times to 1869*

Volume II *The Era of the National Labor Union*

Volume III *The Era of the Knights of Labor*

Volume IV *The Era of the American Federation of Labor, the Railroad Brotherhoods, and the United Mine Workers, 1890-1903*

Volume V *The Black Worker from 1909-1919*

For forthcoming volumes are:

Volume VII *The Era from World War II to the AFL-CIO Merger, 1937-1954*

Volume VIII, *The Era Since the AFL-CIO Merger, 1955-1980*

Philip S. Foner, Professor Emeritus of History at Lincoln University, is one of the most widely published authors in Afro-American history. He is the author of *Essays in Afro-American History* and co-editor of *Proceedings of the Black State Conventions*, also published by Temple University Press.

Ronald L. Lewis is an Assistant Professor of Black Studies at the University of Delaware and the author of *Coal, Iron, and Slaves: Industrial Slavery in Maryland and Virginia*. 7 1/2 x 10

# JAMES VAN DER ZEE

## Master Photographer



James Van Der Zee is internationally recognized as one of the most important photographers of our time.

By Lloyd Fleming

James Augustus Van Der Zee, internationally recognized as one of the most important photographers of our time, was born on June 29, 1886 in the quaint New England setting known as Lenox, Massachusetts. His renowned photographs definitively capture the essence of our people. A

depth of substance and feeling are indicative qualities inherent in Van Der Zee's work. Exhibiting an early interest in photography, he acquired his first camera at age 14 through a magazine advertisement which offered the camera as a prize for selling perfume. Essentially self-taught he

began by taking pictures of family and friends in rural areas of Massachusetts and Virginia as well as in New York.

Van Der Zee's professional career began in 1915 as a darkroom assistant at the Gertz Department Store in Newark, New Jersey. A year later he returned to

New York and opened his first studio in Harlem. Van Der Zee's GGG Studio, which bore the initials of his first wife, the late Gaynella Granley Greenlee. Other studios followed. With perspective eye and his favorite 8x10 large format camera, James Van Der Zee caught history in the making. The techniques Van Der Zee employed in as he says "making a photograph," rather than, "taking a photograph," included placing his subjects in various distinctive settings, use for multiple image, and retouching the negative to eliminate flaws. His pictorial compositions span over a half century. During the Harlem Renaissance, (1919-1929), he photographed such illustrious personalities as Florence Mills, Countee Cullen, Joe Johnson, and Bill "Bojangles" Robinson. He also became the official photographer for Marcus Garvey.

Included among his major publications are

"Harlem on My Mind," and "The Harlem Book of the Dead." (A collaboration by Owen Dodson & Camille Billops) In addition Mr. Van Der Zee is the recipient of honorary doctoral degrees from Seton Hall University and Haverford College. His first major exhibition came in 1969 in the "Harlem on My Mind" exhibit which was held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 1980 Van Der Zee ended his 12 year retirement and began once again "making photographs." Portrait sittings are currently being scheduled by appointment only. At the opening of the 1981 Newark Black Film Festival, Mr. Van Der Zee was presented with a proclamation denouncing June 17, 1981 as James Augustus Van Der Zee Day in the City of Newark.

The feeling that one gets from viewing a Van Der Zee photograph can best be described in the words of another master photographer, Chester

By Edward  
Lloyd Fleming

## Black History Quiz

1. To what position was NAACP attorney Constance Baker Motley appointed in 1966 by President Johnson?
2. In 1968, The Kerner Commission reported that this factor was the principal cause of 1967 disturbances.
3. In 1773, this African-born poetess published her book, "Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral."
4. This Black college organized the first Black air combat unit, 99th Purs. Squad in 1941.
5. The first state to abolish slavery.
6. Founder of the Afro-American Unity Organization.
7. In 1800, this young insurrectionist planned to seize an arsenal at Richmond, Va. and free the slaves. Perhaps as many as 1,000 slaves were prepared to revolt.
8. One of the first Black music teachers in America, founder of the Newport Colored Union Church & Society & a missionary to Africa in 1826.
9. Who created the literary character Jesse B. Simple?
10. Who was the first Black man to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor?

ANSWERS: 1. Federal Judge 2. White House 3. Philip Morris 4. Tuskegee Institute 5. Tuskegee 6. Tuskegee 7. Charles P. Bowles 8. Negro 9. Langston Hughes 10. Senator William C. Morris 11. Charles L. M. 12. Negro

# Names in Black History

History doesn't tell us much about Pedro Alonso Niño, the black navigator who played an important part in the discovery of the New World.

But then, history doesn't tell us much about many achievements by blacks.

## BLACKS AND THE EARLIEST YEARS

1350 — Orson, in his Massollek abroad, wrote of the exploration across the seas by the ships of Mali.

1375 — Legend among North American Indians about people coming from the land of the sun (the East?) who had black skin and "curly" hair.

1492 — Peter Alonso Niño, pilot of one of Columbus' ships, was alleged to be of black ancestry.

1501 — Diego d'Nigro, (James the Black), was cabin boy on Columbus' fourth voyage.

1512 — Peter Meso, of African descent, traveled with Ponce de Leon in Florida in search of the "Fountain of Youth."

1512 — John Gardo, a slave or a free Negro, planned three grains of wheat that started wheat growing in the New World.

1526 — First slave revolt on United States soil, at Lake Vassquez d'Algon, a colony of San Miguel. This settlement later became either Virginia or South Carolina.

1527 — Esteban, or Estevanico (Urte Stephen) Dorantes, greatest most famous Afro-Spanish explorer in the annals of American discovery.

1597 — One of the first nurses in the first hospital in St. Augustine, Florida (the oldest city in the United States) was a Black woman.

1619 — Twenty Blacks landed with the earliest English colonists at Jamestown; beyond the

Mayflower.

### BLACKS AND THE REVOLUTION

1770 — Crispus Attucks was the first person killed during a confrontation between colonial citizens and garrisoned British soldiers on March 5.

1773 — Phillis Wheatley won wide acclaim for her *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*. She was only the second woman in all Briti

sh America to bring out a volume of poetry.

1775 — Salena Poon Peter Salem and Bazzilla Lew fought valiantly in the famous battle of Bunker Hill (Bread's Hill) on June 17.

1776 — Prince Whipple, a slave later freed, was one of the owners who joined General George Washington across the Delaware River on Christmas Day to win crucial victory over the British.

1780 — Paul and John Coffey petitioned Massachusetts House of Representatives to cease with holding of slaves, especially in light of the fact that Black men had joined the American armies to strike the British for destroying their homes to their colonies.

1783 — Bahadur, an African, petitioned a Massachusetts legislative body that she had been denied "one morsel of that immense wealth, a part which hath been accumulated by her own industry; and the whole augmented by her servitude."



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# THEATRE

## Paul Robeson

by Phillip Hayes Dean, directed by Harold Scott, set and costume design by Michael Marlowe, lighting design by Steve Pfefferberg, musical direction and arrangements by Mrs. Eva Scott, special arrangements and orchestrations by Mrs. Eva C. Brooks, choreography by Dianne McIntyre, stage manager: Kenneth Johnson, technical director: Peter Benedek, sculpture by Christopher Cade.

by Lillian Webster

**Crossroads** Theatre Company has elected to celebrate "Black History Month" with Phillip Hayes Dean's play, "Paul Robeson". The dramatic presentation is a fitting tribute to Paul Robeson, distinguished scholar, author, actor, concert and recording artist and political activist.

Apart from his documented achievements, and perhaps more importantly, Robeson was a man unceasingly compassionate, a humanist who championed the cause of the proletariat throughout the world. Truly a "people's artist."

This compelling concern is brilliantly brought out in Dean's script, which provoked considerable controversy in its initial production.

Consisting of two characters, Paul Robeson and his younger accompanist, Cassius Brown, the play is a salute to the legacy of Robeson's career: a 75th birthday salute at Carnegie Hall. Set Designer, Michael Massey's recreation of Carnegie Hall achieves understated elegance.

Due to failing health, Robeson is unable to attend but refuge his appreciation "... though I have not been able to be active for years, I want you to know that I am the same Paul..."

From the moment the theatre lights are dimmed, Avery Brooks, as Robeson, renders a bravura performance. Subtly, almost imperceptibly, Brooks transforms the aging Robeson into an enthusiastic, idealistic youth recalling his student days at Rutgers University.

Brooks evokes these, and subsequent mentor emotions in Robeson's development with grace and facility. His singing is right on target, and the play flows smoothly, treating the audience to a multi-dimensional kaleidoscope of Robeson's life.

There are inherent risks in according an artist unqualified praise for a stage performance. Perhaps the critical judgment of the reviewer will be called into question, an after burden of expectation placed upon the theatregoer or the actor himself. In this case, the risks are warranted. For Avery Brooks is quite simply superb in his portrayal of the "tall, lean" in our focus.

Virtually a one character vehicle, Brooks is on stage for well over two hours, no small feat in itself. Beyond this test of stamina and pacing, it is the caliber and quality of the performance that's so astonishing.

In this enactment of the harrowing years at Rutgers and Columbia and the brief but frustrating sojourn of a prestigious Wall Street law firm, Brooks captures the suppressed fury, the indignation suffered, the grief at Rev. Robeson's death and the occasional bouts of uncertainty that plagued a youthful Robeson in his efforts to "chart a mighty big ocean", a bequest from his father.

Robeson's entrance into Harlem's glorious age of "The New Negro" (a phrase coined by Alain Locke) is convincingly conveyed as Brooks interprets the exultation, the wonder and pure glee that Robeson no doubt

feltly and commitment to career even with an abrupt turn in *Act Two*. Following a stay in Europe, which he spent discovering the course which would be of most help to his people, Robeson was met with scorn, rebuffing and was ultimately blacklisted, his passport seized, travel forbidden. Called upon to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee, Robeson's failure to "cooperate" led to cancellation of his contracts, censorship of his speeches and surveillance of his movements, an ingenious US equivalent of apartheid. The curtain of silence descended.

As Robeson's accompanist, Lawrence Beamer, Ernie Scott is instrumental to the success of the play. His gifted musicianship is in full evidence as the themes reverberate with resonant chords and crescendos. Scott alternates between setting and echoing that mood shifts that are so vital in the life of the play.

These relatively care-free years of closeness to

ed Paul Robeson on Broadway, would place, one would think, some measure of intimidation upon the next to tackle this difficult and arduous role. However, Avery Brooks is never tentative in his approach. He seizes the role with assurance, intensity, imbuing it with his individualistic interpretation.

Jones played the role to expert fashion, but his bombastic style, while indicating the powerful magnitude and charisma of Robeson, neglected to fully develop the sensitivities and compassion of Paul Robeson. And it is in these nuances and subtleties of character that Brooks is so brilliant.

Also, Brooks is pos-

### Photos By Harry Rubel



Avery Brooks as Paul Robeson

sessed of a fine voice of such timbre, clarity and dazzling depth, it very closely approximates the belated Robeson basic profound. The intervals of song that became Robeson's trademarks knew a stirring and also tragic impact upon audiences.

Through this predication directed by Harold

Scott, who boasts an impressive list of credits and accomplishments, Paul Robeson's desire to "make freedom ring and touch people's hearts" will be noted. For those who attend will surely carry with them a piece of his dream from this evening at the theatre.



Ernie Scott and Avery Brooks

# AN INTERVIEW WITH ANTONIO FARGAS

by Ronald Haynes

Antonio Fargas enters the rehearsal hall with no fanfare. "Find to get something to eat," he says. Placing his script and take-out bag on a table, the lanky actor poses for photographs, and prepares for a discussion that is briefly interrupted by requests for autographs. Accepting this with aplomb, Fargas concedes that it is a necessary function of an international personality.

For an actor who starred for four years in a hit television *blaxploitation* series, "Sisterly and Hutch," Fargas is remarkably unaffected. Nothing giddy or "show biz" about him. When he takes to the stage of TUT this month in LaTice Jones' (aka Immacula Barakat) "Dutchman," he will be interpreting a role he saw in its original production 18 years ago in Greenwich Village. Robert Hooks starred then, but Fargas would later work with him as one of the original members of the Negro Ensemble Company.

"Dutchman" is basically a two-character drama—a study of two people caught up in the antagonistic racial atmosphere of the early 1960's. Fargas remembers that era well. A native New Yorker, he got his start over 20 years ago when he answered an ad in the *Amsterdam News*. It was a casting call for Shirley Clarke's "Cool World" (1961). With no previous acting experience, young Fargas plunged into the world of movies and theater.

He began studying with the American Community Theater and Lloyd Richards and Robert Hooks' Group Theater Workshop, the forerunner of NEC.

Among Fargas' early credits are parts in *Slaves*, "The Slave" and "The Toilet," "Ceremonies in Dark Old Men," "Day of Absence," "The Happy Ending," "Dream on Monkey Mountain," and "The Great White Hope." He had a stint with the Hanya Act Workshop, and joined Robert Downey's "Putney Swope" (the truth and soul musical) while on Broadway in "White Hope." During this apprenticeship, Fargas learned, he says, "what to do and what not to do." And since that time, he has viewed all of his roles in film, stage, and television as learning experiences. "Putney" was a bizarre experience," he says. "I was acting in 'White Hope' during the filming, so that I really was not able at the time to see what we had. A lot of the film was improvised. My role was expanded from its original concept." Fargas also calls the film "nowhere" and ahead of its time.

Fargas' wide ranging repertoire includes many off-beat portrayals. Having developed in an urban environment, he is able to draw upon experience for verisimilitude. "Shaft," "Fox Brown," and "Chopara Jones" are admited Black exploitation films that Fargas does not regret doing. "There's nothing wrong with the Black exploitation pictures. I believe their time has come and gone. If you have variety, there is room for all types of pictures. Everything I've done has been part of an acting education for me." The years spent in Los Angeles were profitable and, he notes, theater is growing on the West coast. "But there is not the comradery among actors out there that you have in New York." And Antonio Fargas seems to be one of the few actors who can move with facility through the media without having his art suffer.

Does an established performer have problems finding work? "The rea-



Photo by Glen Frieson

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Does an established performer have problems finding work? "The rea-

sion makes problems for everybody. Look," he says, "all actors are hurting for work. Unfortunately, not enough material is being written for Black actors. I hope to write and direct in the future. I've done some writing, and I now have a great respect for writers."

Fargas agrees, in principle, with the boycott called by certain Black leaders against film studios that do not hire enough Black actors, directors, cameramen, etc.

Concerning the recent controversy of whether Black performers should act in the classics—Shakespeare, Moliere,

O'Neill—that were not written for Black faces, Fargas is conciliatory. "We should not be prevented from doing 'Hamlet.' But the audience should be aware that it's an experimental venture. Black actors can no longer be typecast as 'White actors' unless a particular point is being made in the play."

But aren't Black Performers on television specifically in sit-coms stereotypes? Are they accepted by Whites only as singers, dancers, and comedians? "Through my roles, I try to educate Black audiences that I'm an actor. Certain actors on the sit-coms are very good at the characters they portray. What should they do? Refuse all roles?" Black audiences should know that there is power in the depiction of the 'Uncle Tom'. On the screen, as in life, Blacks show only so much to Whites. Where would we (Black performers) be today without the *Stepin' Fetchits*?"

With the advent of cable television, Fargas sees a brighter future for all actors. "With more outlets available, there may be more opportunities for more artists. Right now a Black actor may make an initial impact, but how long will he last for another script?"

TUT's "Dutchman" has a dual purpose. It is relevant for the 1980's in Fargas' view because "the audience gets a perspective of what Blacks had to go through. It is about Cleo's life character he

plays struggle and maturity, his ability to act on what he knows. He becomes the victim in a total sense."

Fargas says film acting is particularly challenging because shooting is done out of sequence. "The good actor can modulate his performance. He or she can remember a scene and attitude in it—an emotion, whether two buttons were fastened or not. A good director will be sure all the scenes match up." Fargas says he enjoyed working on "Convack" and "Next Stop, Greenwich Village" because of the directors. His character of a tragic gay decorator in "Village" was based in part on someone he knew. Another favorite role was in Louis Malle's "Pretty Baby" for which he was critically acclaimed.

Antonio Fargas is now in a position where he can be more selective about the roles he chooses. "The future will see me gearing down and spending more time with my wife and family."

The immediate future will find Antonio Fargas on the stage of Theater of Universal Images at 1020 Broad Street, Newark. Bernice's "Dutchman" will run from February 5 through the 28th with performances on Friday and Saturday at 8:30 p.m., Sunday at 3:00 p.m. General admission is \$6.00 and advance tickets may be purchased at the box office Mon., Fri., 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.

For further information call (201) 596-0407.

## The resurrection of Edmonia Lewis

By Michael Mandell

Most Black Americans are familiar with the history of Frederick Douglass, the great freedom fighter and U.S. Ambassador to Haiti. His travel log of April 29, 1887 included these biographical notes about Edmonia Lewis: "first Negro artist of the western continent."

"The oddly dressed woman materialized before Helen and I as we strolled along the Pincian Hill. It was not herself a note or remark made my young friend as I remember her, at least belonged to another world and that is where she was. She had been at Oberlin when I was. Suine was a student there but seems had run over when I first met her and her Negro father. Stugardon had fallen in her following the re-naming of me as wife of the white Americans as her friends. Defended by John Mercer Langston, lone Negro attorney, she was exonerated but the ergo had been a convincing all. Stories about we such as the one which appeared in Poincaré's *L'Amouriste*, made an impression on Negro readers throughout the United States. She became known as a sculptress, the first Negro American to receive such recognition and has now lived in Rome for more than 20 years."

(Mary) Edmonia Lewis was born on July 14, 1843 near Albany, N.Y. Orphaned at the age of eight, she and her brother were raised by her mother's Indian tribe, the Chippewas.

In 1885, at age 12, she began her freshman year at Oberlin College. However, she never graduated from Oberlin.

"At that time, I considered returning to my life in the wild but my love for art would not permit it," she has been quoted as saying. "So, after I finished what little schooling had n't been thought I would go to Boston and learn a little music. I went."

Once in Boston, abolitionist leader William Lloyd Garrison introduced Lewis to sculptor Edmund Brantlett while studying with Brantlett Lewis set in her own studio.

Eventually her political inclinations as well as her desire for fuller artistic development led her to leave America. The same is a port as mediator of Colored Robert Gould Shaw the same leader of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment (the all-Black regiment in the Civil War) raised her enough money for her to sail to Rome.

One of her first works created in Rome was entitled "Ezra." As reported in the *New Orleans Picayune* this symbolization of the alienated 19th Century Black American female led her to win to \$50,000.00 commission. Having thus established her fame she went to be patronized by some of the most illustrious personalities and institutions at her time. Harvard College commissioned a portrait bust of Longfellow. Dr. Henry Martyn Cushing a museum which is still standing today in the Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Mass.

Returning to America in 1926, she brought with her six of her more popular works. Her first two exhibitions were held at the San Francisco Art Association and the San Jose Library. 1,600 visitors were reported to have viewed the latter exhibition. "Cheerfully Dying" was entered in the art competition.



## PORTRAIT—ERMONIA LEWIS

petition at the American Centennial Celebration in Philadelphia, 1876. Although it won an award, the critics described it as "monstrous in its sensuous multitude of dying struggles."

Many historians argue that special considerations pertaining to the socio-economic limitations placed upon an artist have no place in the arenas where judgements regarding the value of the art works are made.

Notwithstanding the value of their opinions, the fruits of our labor are any other social betterment directly linked to the sensations in the times in which we live and create. Those times for Edmonton Lewis were those of men responding to the call of manifest destiny, even at the risk of annihilating the native American's way of life.

Unavoidably, her history was the history of John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, Harriet Tubman's underground railroad and the Lucy Stoners - a group of 19th Century American women who petitioned Congress for the right to retain the use of the maiden name after marriage.

Should special considerations be given Edmonia Lewis? No. Just consideration. Consider this: Edmonia Lewis was an orphaned, Black American woman, American female artist and her works reflected just that. She lived in America during a time when any one of these characteristics could have gotten her with coal on her skirt and that to us, why, through the years was recognized as the first Black American female artist to receive international recognition, international award, was a secret. We don't know how or when she died and the bulk of her works remains lost, destroyed and denied.

The backlash is if anything even more unusual. Consider that today, the public hasn't heard of South

Amar artist. A Bauhaus Stone whose etchings tell to the hoing that plagued his life during the riots in Germany. S. Amos' *Three For one moment* can you name even one in a gallery of artists scattered around toward Chicago? in the '30s whose works were referred to as "Art in China" a joke. When was he one of any Bauhaus American artist whose works have remained dedicated to the berries that scoured the prairie air trains.

In 1979, The Edmonia Lewis Foundation, Inc. was formed for the purpose of restoring to public prominence Lewis' history. Operated by a non-profit board of art and business professionals, who are brought together by our common interest in providing greater advancement within the plastic arts for minority groups such as those represented by Lewis' history.

As a historian I sincerely hope we will advocate the historicification of all major accomplishments of minority artists within established and recognized support structures.

At present the foundation is compiling the details for a traveling retrospective exhibition of Lewis' works. Scheduled to open in 1961, it will travel around America and to Europe.

the U.S. Postmaster General and JNL&CO for the coinciding issuance of an Edmonia Lewis commemorative stamp. Our appeal has received endorsement from a segment of the white community and such support as the Adels M. of the Smithsonian, The Maryland Commission of Indian and Afro-American History and The Studio Museum in Harlem.

# DON'T WAIT



## SUBSCRIBE

# The Woodcarver And The Printer

Woodcarving was a handcraft practiced by many Black artisans before the Revolution. Often they whittled little toys, statuettes and beautiful pipes for pleasure. But very often these skills were used for advertising, textiles and the commercial printing trade.

In an era when most people could not read, store signs served as advertisements. Woodcarvers would often make three-dimensional signs that really served to produce.

One such art can be named Job of Freehold. New Jersey, carver building cigar store signs. These signs or store marks were very bold and attracted a great deal of a customer. They also served as often identifiers before street numbers were used.

Hand-painted cloths and wallpaper were also very much desired. Fabrics, floral patterns were also made when the slaves in the sugar plantations and gardens and gardens. This craft was practiced in Africa and brought here by slaves who learned it to decorate adobe cloth at home. In the Colonies this pretty pattern sold for a higher price than plain cloth.

Other crafts newspapers. This was true of wood carving and printing. New in "newspaper" he printed news kept people informed about what was going on throughout the new world. Every major town had its printer, and Black men worked in these shops with them.

Carver and Pompey worked with their father setting type in a shop of Thomas Fleet. These slaves were also expected to do woodblocks used



in block engraving. All the pictures that decorated the small books and ballads of their owner were printed from these woodblocks.

Many other blacks worked in the printer's trade. Primus F. Cox was the first printer in publishing almanacs, pamphlets and the oldest

American newspaper still currently printed. The New Hampshire Gazette Primus died at 90 after over 50 years of working.

More than 20 other newspapers were printed by Blacks between 1830 and 1855, including Frederick Douglass' "North Star."

# What's Going On

## Troupe to Blend with Trumpeter

Trumpeter Ahmed Abdulkarim will join a dance troupe called "Sounds in Motion" for a free mid-day concert of modern and Afro-American dance at Kean College in Union Feb. 16.

The program, set for 1:40 p.m. in the Little Theatre, will feature the works of company director and choreographer Diane McIntyre. Her troupe, formed in 1972, is based in New York and has been touring nationally and abroad since 1976.

Among works to be performed are "Liquid Magic," which premiered in Rome a year ago, "Life Force," and an excerpt from McIntyre's dance-drama "Just a Myth." The formal presentation will be followed by a lecture demonstration offering an explanation of the troupe's dance technique and of Afro-American dance styles which have influenced its work.

McIntyre is a native of Cleveland who taught and choreographed at Ohio State University and the University of Wisconsin before moving to New York.

The program is sponsored by the Black Student Union and the Student Activities Office, and is open to the public.

## Newark Library Opens Exhibit On The Black Woman

An exhibition in honor of the Black Woman opened at the Newark Public Library on Mon-

day, February 1, 1982. The opening officially began the Black History Month Celebration at the Library, which has scheduled a series of events.

The exhibit, which runs through April 16, will feature photographs, flyers, books, posters and magazines depicting the important, but often unrecognized, contributions of the Black Woman in the fields of civil rights, literature, sports, politics and communications.

The exhibit can be seen on the second floor gallery of the Library. All events are FREE. For information, call James Brown at (201) 733-5411 or 7785. The Library, located in downtown Newark, is easily accessible by auto or mass transit.

## Broadway Hit "For Colored Girls..." To Be Seen On Public Television

A memorable theatrical event occurred on Sept. 15, 1976 when seven young black women strode on stage at the Booth Theatre on Broadway and spent the next 90 minutes celebrating their blackness and their womanhood in an unforgettable "cheesepoem" with music and dance, entitled "For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When The Rainbow Is End."

Written by Ntozake Shange, who also starred in the Broadway production, "For Colored Girls," now will be presented on American Playhouse on February 23 at 9 p.m. ET. The 90-

minute presentation, to be aired during the American celebration of Black History Month, was directed by Oz Scott, who also staged the award-winning Broadway production. It was videotaped on location in Miami and Coconut Grove, Florida, during the summer of 1981.

American Playhouse is public television's new weekly series of original dramas, comedies, music and stage adaptations. The series is presented by a consortium of four public television stations—KETC (Los Angeles), South Carolina ETV, WGBH (Boston) and WNET (New York).

The American Playhouse production of "For Colored Girls..." has a principal cast of seven, including Ms. Shange, the author, and Trazia Brawley, who won the 1976 Tony Award as Best Featured Actress in a Play for her performance in the Broadway version of the play.

\*Check local listings.

## Jazz At The New School

New York is the jazz capital of the world and New York jazz lovers can find seven courses on listening, learning and playing jazz during Spring 1982.

To make live jazz performances more accessible to older and younger New Yorkers who can't attend late night clubs and to give veteran jazz fans more choices, The New School is pioneering early evening jazz with monthly Friday evening concerts. "Jazz at 6" already presented Zoot Sims on January 15, and on February 12 it will feature The Biggest Little



Band with Kenny Drexen, Fathers and Sons Buck, John Pizzocelli and Al and Joe Cohn will appear on stage in the New School Auditorium on March 12, and pianist Dave McKenna will end the Friday night series on April 16. Admission is \$6 for each performance.

For those interested in jazz history and appreciation, the university is offering "The Golden Age of Jazz, 1925-45" and "New York Jazz."

Budding jazz musicians can take theory and performance courses such as: "Basic Instrumental Jazz Technique," "Jazz Piano for Beginners," "Special Blue—A Beginning Jazz Piano Method," and "Jazz Drums."

All New School jazz courses take place during evening hours starting the week of February 8. Registration information can be obtained by calling (212) 741-5690.

## Bobby Watson's Quintet To Entertain At Newark Museum

A free jazz concert by The Bobby Watson Quintet will take place at the Newark Museum on Sunday, February 21 at 3:00 p.m., part of special Museum programs for Black History Month.

Members of the group are saxophonist-flutist Watson, vocalist Pam Watson, trombonist Robbie Eubanks, pianist James Wildman, bassist James McLeavine and percussionist Rudy Walker. The quintet has previously performed at

Tweed's in Newark and Giltner's in West Paterson.

The group's leader, Bobby Watson, holds a B.A. in Music Theory and Composition from the University of Miami. He spent approximately five years with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers after growing up in Kansas City.

Watson once said, "I want our music to reach people, so we try to include a little of everything from jazz a little swing, some samba, funk, rock, things people hear on the radio."

The sound system for the February 21 Concert has been arranged through Studio 198 of Newark.

The Newark Museum is located at 49 Washington in downtown Newark. Admission is free to the Museum and the jazz concert.

## Alvin Ailey Coming To County College

Somerset County College will present, for one performance only, the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble at 8 p.m., Friday, March 12.

The general admission ticket price is \$5. For ticket information, call the College Center Information Desk, 525-1200, ext. 327.

The Repertory Ensemble was established in the fall of 1974. Since its inception, it has been very successful in serving its dual functions as both an arena for performance exposure for 14 promising students as well as being a vehicle by which

new audience throughout the country can be exposed to the arts. These audiences have consisted largely of persons in institutionalized settings—correction facilities, mental health centers, drug rehabilitation programs and hospitals, as well as colleges and universities throughout the east coast.

Under the artistic direction of Sylvie Waters, a former Aliley dancer, the group has studied and performed works from the standard Aliley repertoire, as well as original works by students and choreographers such as Milian Myers, Christine Lawson, Gus Solomon, and Diane McIntyre. In addition, the ensemble has attempted to maintain an historical perspective of the dance with the inclusion of such dance classics as "Games" by Donald McKayle.

Among its credits the ensemble includes producing five vaginal ballets as its contribution to the very special "Ailey Celebrates Ellington" at the Newark State Theatre at Lincoln Center in August of 1978. The ensemble has also performed as a guest company in the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's New York City concert seasons.

Performances to date have been met with unanimous critical acclaim. The Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble continues to develop as a willing and energetic group of young dancers, choreographers, designers, and theatre technicians alike.

# Black Insights

Edited by  
Papel Charles

Anne G. Brown is a resident of New Jersey. Her interest in poetry led to her co-founding "Urban Voices," a group of poets and writers. Ms. Brown is also the author of several short stories.

## The Numbers Game!

Men Keep Running The Numbers Game  
On Us/They Keep Beating Us To Death  
About The Ratio Of Women To Men  
5:2! "Listen Her BABY It's More Of  
YOU Than There Is Of Us"/BEWARE OF  
THE NUMBERS GAME!

The Numbers Game Causes Most Of Us  
To Become Overly Anxious About Not  
Having A MATE! Which Causes Us To  
Have No Respect For Each Other.  
Most Of The Men That Some Of Us Find  
Ourselves Involved With/Ten Years Ago  
We Wouldn't Even Consider DATING!

Beware of The

NUMBERS  
GAME!

Don't YOU become Victimized By The  
NUMBERS  
GAME.

## "Ain't Nobody"

Because I Look Radiant Most Of The Time  
Don't Be So Presumptuous As To Assume  
There's A Man In My Life...  
There Was A Time When My Whole Mood  
Being/Emotions Centered Around A MAN!  
But Not Anymore!  
I Know Now That I Am The Only One That  
Can Make Me HAPPY!  
Don't Miss Understand Me...  
I, Have My Up Days...And My  
D  
O  
W  
N DAYS.  
BUT IT AINT BECAUSE OF A MAN!  
I Wouldn't PUT That Responsibility...  
On Anybody...ANMORE!  
I'm In Control Of My Life And MY OWN  
EMOTIONS NOW!  
AIN'T NOBODY Responsible For ME...  
MY HAPPINESS/EMOTIONS  
BUT ME!



## "TOUCH ME"

Don't Be Afraid Because I Am  
Black And Beautiful  
TOUCH ME

Don't Be Afraid Because I Dress  
In The Latest Fashions And My Taste  
IS EXQUISITE  
TOUCH ME

Don't Be Afraid Because I'm Intelligent  
TOUCH ME

Don't Be Afraid Because You Might Find  
Me... Aggressive To A Point...  
TOUCH ME

Don't Be Afraid Because I'm Unique...  
TOUCH ME

Don't Be Afraid Because I'm Sophisticated  
...With Lots of... CLASS...  
TOUCH ME

Don't Let My Appearance Intimidate YOU...  
TOUCH ME

You'll Never Get To Know Who I Am Or What  
I'm About Until You...  
TOUCH ME

I Am JUST A TOUCH AWAY...

...TOUCH-H-H-H ME...

# The African Explorer

Continued From Pg. 3

The four were separated for a long time, but eventually, when by accident and good fortune they were reunited, they escaped together from their Indian captors. Moving westward across the Mississippi basin, they traversed the buffalo plains (they were the first newcomers in the Columbian era to see bison) and arrived at a Spanish trading outpost on the California coast. After the grueling journey of 2500 miles from Tampa Bay to San Francisco, the four strangers, who had long ago been given up for dead, were conducted in triumph to Mexico City, where their appearance, J.A. Rogers tells us, "created 'A sensation, the more so as they brought back news of the Seven Golden Cities of Cibola, of which they had had stout confirmation from the Indians. From all accounts these cities possessed wealth equal to which those taken from Mexico or Peru were given."

Estevan, who had started out from Spain as a slave of Donalde de Cárdenas, had arrived in Mexico City eight years later as a free man and a famous explorer. Cabo de Vaca, Malinche and de Cárdenas left for Spain. This former was later appointed Governor of La Plata, where, after a mutiny, he returned home to Chiapas, while the other two settled down to raise happy families.

The Moors became a favorite of Antonio de Mendoza, Viceroy of Mexico, since this noble cavalier was particularly interested in extending Spanish rule north of the Rio Grande. Therefore, it was not long before Estevan was selected to lead an expedition to the Seven Golden Cities of Cibola.

The myth of the seven golden cities of Cibola was part of the chimera of an El Dorado that Europeans (slightly encouraged by Indians, who were always relieved to see these short Interlopers vanish in some wilderness) were to chase in vain for centuries. But in this case, the myth did have some basis in reality, for at sunrise and sunset, the high cliff dwellings of the Hopi-Havasupai Indians of New Mexico were bathed in golden light, and from a distance they appear, to this day, to be gigantic edifices of solid gold.

Estevan had set out from Culiacan, on the Gulf of California, in March, 1539, at the head of a party of three hundred. The majority were Indian soldiers and carriers, but according to Indian accounts of the expedition there were also several "Black Mexicans" in the group. In addition, two priests, Fray Marcos de Niza, and Fray Cristóbal, accompanied him as Official Records.

Prior to the Estevan-de-Niza expedition into the arid wilderness of new Mexico, Hernando Cortez, conqueror of Mexico,

Valle spent nearly twelve years trying to push an expedition into the northern country and following Estevan's discovery there was a wild desire on the part of explorers to find the fabled Seven Cities. Cortez, however, failed to be the discoverer. Bernal Diaz asserts that the journey, was of the greatest value to Christopher, and to Spain in particular. The value of the discovery was such that we can only rightly accord to Estevan an important place among the early explorers of America.

Estevan's march across the Indian country of New Mexico and South West Arizona began innumerable E. B. Tolson in "The Chronicles of America" says:

Estevan, the African, was one of the earliest explorers of North America and had ventured over a greater part of its wilderness than any man before him.

at... many long sites line. The Andes was one of a feature now, living freedom... lifted... out of the third of slavery... After this great journey from Florida, and given these hundred men to discover the cities of anger treasure and surprise doors, he made his tour like an Oriental chieftain or like a Monk's prince... Gifts were brought to him... His tall slender body soon flattered robes dyed with the colors of the rainbow. Talls of brilliant feathers and strings of bells descended from his neck. He carried a magic gourd in his hand, and with one blow after another he feathered... Plates of sand, shells and fish-skin drums played his march across the earth events. And an even exceeding human of gaily-bedecked young women walked the parade of Estevanico, the black Bear chief...

The Estevan expedition crossed deserts (this must have been familiar terrain for a Saharan man), and came across Indians who had never heard of Spaniards. He and his companion de Niza parted "on Passion Sunday after dinner," and according to Castaneda, the historian of the Coronado expedition, which followed a year after Estevan's:

It seems that... the Negro did not get along well with the Indians because he took the women that were given him... Besides the Indians in those places got along well with the Negro better, because they had seen him before.

Unarmed, and sometimes naked, Estevan had survived the long march from Florida with nothing to protect him but his reputation as a medicine-man, his cunning, his phenomenal physical prowess, his charismatic presence and an invincible good nature; but in New Mexico, he came as a surrogate conquistador, posing as a medicine-man. At least, that was how he would have been perceived by the Indians of Hawkfish. He did, on his journey, meet Indians who knew nothing about Southwest, but Spanish slave-catchers had been kidnapping Indians and selling along the Pacific coast and Central American island-depopulating large areas, and the Hawkfish might well have heard news of this awesome threat to the survival of all Indians. So when Estevan, having reached the outer walls of Cibola, sent messengers:

with the announcement that their last had come to make peace and to care the sick, the Indians became enraged and ordered the intruders out of the country on pain of death. Estevan, fearing his life, and that outside the walls of Cibola, he was scared "The way with others a lame leg" when the men of Hawkfish suddenly

launched upon his followers. Some of those who fled took back, thought they had seen Estevan fall beneath a thick veil of death.

J.A. Roberts tells us that the legends of the Zuni Indians confirm the visit of Estevanico and call him the precursor of the white men. They speak of him as being bold and cheerful, and in their poetic oral account state that,

It is to be believed that a long time ago when the winds lay over the walls of Wright's me, when smoke hung over the house-tops, and the ladder-roads were still unknown, then the Black Mexicans came from their abodes in Everlasting Summerland... Then and thus was killed by an arrow of the Hawkfish, the Negro, the son of the amaya of Kyn-kime, one of the Black Mexican, a large man with chili lips... Then the rest ran away, chased by our grandfathers and went back towards their country in the land of everlasting summer, (Wright's Great Man of Color)

Sir Clements R. Markham, the noted historian, added his testimony to Estevan's epic achievements as an explorer, and his tragic death,

This is an instance of a Negro having taken an important part in the exploration of the continent. Estevan was the discoverer of Cibola, the territory of New Mexico.

De Niza fled back to Mexico, when he was to claim for himself the credit. Estevan so richly deserved, but Cortez, noted for his sarcasm, and his contempt for cowards, called the priest "a common impostor" and declared further that he had tried to lay claim to the discovery of countries he had never seen.

Wright, in conclusion writes,

Why is it that Negro's name has remained practically in obscurity for more than three and a half centuries? The answer is most difficult. Until recently historians were content not to hear with any degree of accuracy and verity due credit the work and noble deeds of the Negro companions of Spanish conquerors... moreover, masters were required to be silent in the credit for whatever those of African descent accomplished.

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